

K. Millet (J. B.)

A

PARTICULAR ACCOUNT
OF THE
INSURRECTION
OF THE
NEGROES of St. DOMINGO,

BEGUN IN AUGUST, 1791:

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.



THE FOURTH EDITION:

With NOTES and an APPENDIX extracted from authentic
original Papers.

*SPEECH made to the NATIONAL ASSEMBLY,
the third of November, 1791, by the DEPUTIES from
the GENERAL ASSEMBLY of the French Part of St.
DOMINGO.*

S I R S,

THE General Assembly of the French part of St. Domingo has
appointed us a deputation to address you. —

In that character, our first duty is to assure you of the inviolable attachment of this important part of the empire to the mother-country, before we describe to you the terrible events which are now working its destruction, and solicit the earliest and most effectual succour, to save, if it be yet possible, its wretched remains.

Long have we foreseen the evils which afflict us, and which, doubtless, will end in our annihilation, if the national justice and power interpose not speedily for our relief.

We come to lay before you some particulars which yet will give but an imperfect idea of our disasters and of our situation.

The General Assembly of the French part of St Domingo, after having been constituted at *Leogane*, had appointed to hold its sessions

A

in

in the town of the Cape. The deputies were gradually assembling there for the purposes of their mission.

Several of them arriving on the 16th (August) at the district of Limbé, distant six leagues from the Cape, were there witnesses of the burning of a trash-house on *Chabaud's* plantation.

The incendiary was a negro-driver* of *Desgrieux's* plantation. Armed with a cutlass, he fled; *M. Chabaud* saw, pursued, and overtook him; they fought; the negro was wounded, taken, and put in irons.

Being interrogated, he deposed, "that all the drivers, coachmen, domestics, and confidential negroes, of the neighbouring plantations and adjacent districts, had formed a plot to set fire to the plantations and to murder all the whites." He marked out, as ring-leaders, several negroes of his master's plantation, four of *Flaville's*, (situated at Acul, three leagues from the Cape,) and the negro *Paul*, driver on *Blin's* plantation at Limbé.

The municipality of Limbé proceeded to *M. Chabaud's*; and, on putting the same questions, received the like answers from the incendiary negro. The municipality presented the examination, in form of a verbal process, to the Northern Provincial Assembly; and, informing *Flaville's* attorney (or manager) of the names of the conspirators that were about him, advised his securing and lodging them in the prison of the Cape.

This man, of a mild and gentle disposition, inclined more to confidence than suspicion, assembled the negroes under his command, and, communicating the information he had received from the municipality, told them he could not give credit to a plot so atrocious, and offered them his head if they desired it. With one voice they answered, that the deposition of *Desgrieux's* driver was a detestable calumny, and swore an inviolable attachment to their manager. He had the weakness to believe them, and his credulity has been our ruin. The municipality of Limbé demanded from *M. Planteau*, attorney of *Blin's* plantation, that they might examine the negro *Paul*. This slave, being interrogated, replied, "That the accusation brought against him was false and injurious; that, full of gratitude to his master, from whom he was daily experiencing acts of kindness, he would never be found concerned in plots that might be framed against the existence of the whites and against their property."

In return for this perfidious declaration, and under assurance from *M. Planteau* that *Paul* deserved credit, he was released.

In this state matters continued till the 21st, when the public force of Limbé, at the requisition of the municipality, proceeded to *Desgrieux's* plantation, to take into custody the negro cook, accused of being a ring-leader: the negro fled; found out the negro *Paul*, of *Blin's* plantation, and, in conjunction with the other conspirators, they prepared fire and sword, destined for the completion of their horrible designs.

In the night, between the 22d and 23d, twelve negroes reached the sugar-house on *Noé's* plantation at Acul, seized upon the apprentice refu-

* The French word is *commandeur*, signifying a negro trusted with the care of a small party when at work.

ner; dragged him before the great house, where he expired under their wounds. His cries brought out the attorney of the estate, who was laid breathless on the ground by two musket-balls. The wretches proceeded to the apartment of the head refiner, and assassinated him in his bed. A young man, lying sick in a neighbouring chamber, they left for dead under the blows of their cutlasses; yet he had strength to crawl to the next plantation, where he related the horrors he had witnessed, and that the *surgeon* only was spared; an exception which was repeated in respect to the surgeons in general, of whose abilities the negroes had reckoned they might stand in need.

The plunderers proceeded to *Clement's* plantation, and there killed the proprietor and the refiner.

Day began to break, and favoured the junction of the ill-disposed, who, spread over the plain, with dreadful shouts, set fire to houses and canes, and massacred the inhabitants.

On that same night the revolt had broken out on the three plantations of *Galifet** At one of which, the blacks, with arms in their hands, made way into the chamber of the refiner, with a design to assassinate him, but only wounded him in the arm; favoured by the night, he escaped, and ran to the great house. The whites, who resided there, united for their defence. *M. Odeluc*, a member of the General Assembly, and attorney for the concerns of *Galifet*, came to the Cape, and gave information there of the insurrection of his negroes. Escorted by the patrol, he reached the plantation, seized the ring-leaders, and returned at their head to the town. Immediately he went out again, with twenty men in arms, that he might restore tranquillity and maintain order. But the negroes were all embodied, and attacked him. *Their standard was the body of a white infant impaled upon a stake.* *M. Odeluc*, addressing himself to his coachman, whom he perceived among the foremost, exclaimed, "Wretch, I have ever treated thee with kindness, why dost thou seek my death?" "True," he replied, "but I have promised to cut your throat:" and, that instant, a hundred weapons were upon him. The majority of the whites perished with him, particularly *M. Averoult* also a member of the General Assembly.

At the very same time *Plaville's* gang (that which had so recently sworn fidelity to the attorney) armed themselves, and revolted, entered the apartments of the whites, and murdered five of them who resided on the plantation. The attorney's wife, on her knees, besought the life of her husband. The inexorable negroes assassinated the husband, and told the wife that she and her daughters were reserved for their pleasures.

M. Robert, a carpenter, employed on the same plantation, was seized by the negroes, who bound him between two planks, and sawed him deliberately in two.

A youth, aged sixteen, wounded in two places, escaped the fury of the cannibals, and it is from him we learned these facts. The sword

* At the Cape, it was a proverbial mode of expressing any man's happiness—"Ma fi, il est heureux comme un negre de Galifet."—"He is as happy as one of Galifet's negroes."

was then exchanged for the torch; fire was set to the canes, and the buildings soon added to the conflagration; it was the appointed signal; revolt was the word; and, with the speed of lightning, it flamed out on the neighbouring plantations; wherever there were whites, there were so many victims slaughtered; men, women, the infant, and the aged, expired indiscriminately under the knife of the assassins.

A colonist was murdered by the very negro whom he had most distinguished by acts of kindness. His wife, stretched upon his body, was forced to satisfy the brutality of the murderer.

M. Cagnet, inhabitant of Acul, seeking to escape from these horrors, embarked for the Cape. His domestic negro begged permission to attend him. Such a mark of attachment determined his master to leave him as a guard upon the plantation, that he might endeavour to preserve it. But *M. Cagnet* had hardly set foot on-board, when he saw that slave, with a torch in his hand, setting fire to his property.

Expreses being sent to the Cape, armed citizens and troops of the line were dispatched thence; they proceeded towards the strongest body of mutineers, and destroyed a part of them; but, finding the number of revoltors increasing in centuple proportion to their losses, and being unable to maintain their ground, they retreated in expectation of a reinforcement, which arrived, but not before night, headed by *M. de Touzard*, who took the command of the little army.

M. de Touzard, perceiving that the revoltors were rallying on *Lattour's* plantation, marched thither. Their number might be from three to four thousand. The moment the artillery was ready to play, to disperse them, the negroes pretended to surrender. *M. de Touzard* advanced; many of them exclaimed they would return to their duty. He trusted to their repentance, and retired. Humanity and the interests of the colony enjoined his forbearance, but it was not long before he was undeceived; the negroes separated indeed; but only that they might recruit their numbers with all the neighbouring gangs. The army returned into the town to take new steps for putting an end to the disorder. The revoltors profited by this interval to fill up the measure of their depredations. Our communications with the adjacent districts became impeded. We were alarmed lest the disorder had reached them, and our fears were soon realized. We learned, by means of persons escaped by the sea, that Limbé, Plaisance, Port Margot, were a prey to like horrors, and every citizen, in detailing his misfortunes, discovered to us new crimes.

M. Potier, inhabitant of Port Margot, had taught his negro-driver to read and write. He had given him his liberty, which the fellow enjoyed; he had granted him 10,000 livres, which were soon to be paid to him; he had also given to this negro's mother a piece of land, on which she cultivated coffee. The monster seduced the gang of his benefactor and of his mother, burned and destroyed their possessions, and obtained, for this action, a promotion to the rank of general.

At Great River, an inhabitant, *M. Cardineau*, had two natural sons of colour,* to whom he had given their liberty, and who, in their child-

* In the French colonies, the free negroes, as well as the mulattoes and others of the mixed race, are denominated *people of colour*.

hood, had been the objects of his tenderest cares. They accosted him with a pistol at his breast, and demanded his money. He delivered it; but no sooner had they obtained it than they stabbed him to the heart.

At Acul, *M. Chauvet du Breuil*, deputy to the General Assembly, was assassinated by a mulatto, aged sixteen, his natural son, to whom he destined his fortune, having manumitted him from his childhood.

At the Great Ravine of Limbé, a colonist, father of two young ladies, whites, was tied down by a savage ring-leader of a band, who ravished the eldest in his presence, and delivered the younger over to one of his satellites; their passion satisfied, they slaughtered both the father and the daughters.

M. and Mad. Baillon, with their son-in-law and daughter, encouraged by their negroes, remained on their plantation; but the depredations of those, whom they had most trusted, warned them that it was time to fly. The nurse of *Mad. Baillon*, the younger, confessed to her there was not an instant to be lost, and offered to attend them. An old servant engaged to conduct their steps. Luckily *Mad. Baillon's* nurse was wife of *Paul Blin*, one of the negro generals, and had obtained from him some provisions for her master's family. At her intreaty, he had even promised to provide, at a distant barquadier, a canoe to carry the fugitives to the Cape. But how great their grief at seeing a little skiff, without mast, or oars, or rowers! One of them tried to embark in it; the flimsy boat over-set, and his life, with difficulty, was saved. Again they applied to *Paul*, and his wife reproached him with breaking his promise. He replied, "that he only provided this as a preferable mode of death to that which the revolvers had prepared for the unhappy family:" — petrified at this recital, with terror! despair gave them new strength; they set off on foot, and after being twenty-one days in performing a journey of only five leagues, every day encompassed with dangers, they arrived at Port Margot, whence they reached the Cape.

Mean time the flames gained ground on all sides. *La Petite Anse*, *la Plaine du Nord*, the districts of *Morin*, *Limonade*, presented only heaps of ashes and of mangled carcases.

Nothing, one would think, could deepen the horrors of this recital; and yet, Sirs, it is marked with features of a still more dreadful character, when we see that those slaves, who had been most kindly treated by their masters, were the very soul of the insurrection. It was *they* who betrayed and delivered those humane masters to the assassin's sword; it was *they* who seduced and stirred up to revolt the gangs disposed to fidelity; it was *they* who massacred all who refused to become their accomplices. What a lesson for the *Amis des Noirs*! * What a heart-breaking discovery to the colonists themselves, to whom futurity could suggest nothing but prospects of despair, if, in the midst of so many crimes, there had not yet been found slaves who gave proofs of an invincible fidelity, and who made manifest their determination to reject with disdain the seductions of those who have endeavoured by promises of liberty to enveigle them into certain destruction. Liberty is now theirs, but

* Or friends of the blacks, by which name are distinguished, in France, those who have seconded the English project for abolishing the Slave-Trade.

It is the gift of their masters; the reward of their honest attachment, and it has been ratified by the representatives of the colony, amidst the transports of universal gratitude.

We resume the narrative of our disasters. At this time one hundred thousand negroes were in rebellion, and all the buildings and plantations, of more than half the Northern province, appeared only as one general conflagration. The plains and the mountains were filled with carnage and deluged with blood. The colonists, stupified with fear, knew not where to seek refuge; one flies for safety to the woods; is there betrayed by his negroes, and stabbed: another confides in the promises of his gang; a rebel ring-leader steals in among them; the gang rises, and the proprietor is their first victim.

Scattered over an extent of country, intersected by mountains and deep valleys, the flying inhabitants attempted to rally and to sell their lives dearly. The roads were blockaded; they were taken prisoners and massacred.

They, who re-united, opposed but a feeble bulwark against the swelling torrent; they were routed, taken, and expiated in tortures their exertions for self-preservation. These horrible scenes were acting at the very gate of the town of the Cape. Terror and dismay took possession of every mind; yet all felt the urgency of providing for their common safety. They assembled, acted in concert, the citizens took arms, and the General Assembly placed the patriotic troops under the command of the governor.

The town of the Cape, with about three thousand men at the most, had to keep in check fifteen thousand black inmates, ready to follow the example of those without, and *many ill-disposed whites*. The General Assembly deliberated one entire night upon the means of preservation from internal enemies. The result was, to adhere solely to a well-directed and constant watch over their conduct and their dispositions. The revolt had been too sudden and too well concerted, to leave a hope of stopping or of alleviating its ravages. The town of the Cape (that side next the sea excepted) was defenceless and incapable of fortification, without a delay of several days and immense labour. It was extremely to be feared lest the revolted negroes should pour down upon the town, and, favoured and seconded by those within, make a general massacre of the whole race of the whites. One resource, therefore, only remained; to take possession of the passes of the hills contiguous to the town; to establish a commanding post, which, by the help of the adjoining marshes, might protect it; and to defend the road of la Petite Anse by a battery of cannon and boats lashed together. This resolution was adopted and executed; thenceforwards the Cape, surrounded by a solid pallisade, by chevaux-de-frize, and by considerable posts, might feel its situation less alarming.

During this interval, not a minute was lost in sending information, by sea, to the parishes which were yet uncontaminated, and in suggesting to them the proper precautions to be taken. The inhabitants of those parishes formed a league, and established camps, more or less considerable: these were stationed at Trou, Valliere, Great River, Moruet, Dondon, la Marmelade, Port Margot, and other places in danger. The rebels followed the same plan; they stationed camps in all the districts
they

they had ravaged. Moreover, they forced the camp of the whites at Great River, and killed or put to flight all the inhabitants of that district; the camp at Dondon shared the same fate, after a contest of seven hours, in which more than one hundred whites fell. The few unfortunate people, who escaped on that occasion, sought refuge among the Spaniards, but were driven back.

MM. Granal, Roynaud, and Lambert, inhabitants of Great River and Dondon, reached, however, the house a Spanish colonist, their intimate friend: this worthy man, on one side urged by the strongest feelings, on the other by the fear of being burnt out by his countrymen, determined to keep the three Frenchmen locked up in his closet, whence he let them escape at night, in the midst of deserts, and under advantage of a storm.

Shall it be told you, that you may feel the indignation which the conduct of our neighbours must have excited, that depositions and the public report state, that several inhabitants of Dondon, who took refuge among the Spaniards, were driven beyond the limits, and sold to the rebel negro chiefs, in consideration of three Portugal pieces (132 livres of France) per head, and that they were put to death.

The districts of Rocou, Maribaroux, le Terrier Rouge, Jacquesy, Caracole, Ouanaminthe, and Fort Dauphin; forming the Eastern part of the Northern province, were still uninjured; *their* defence was an object of instant necessity.*

A camp was established under the orders of *M. de Rouvrai*, which completely answered the purpose for which it was formed, in spite of the continual efforts of the banditti.

While these alarming transactions were passing, the town of the Cape was resorted to by the inhabitants of the neighbouring hills and plains, escaping from the sword of the assassins. It was then that *M. Blanche-Gandé†* thought it prudent to march out two small bodies of troops, which, joined by *M. de Rouvrai*, attacked and carried, in succession, several camps of the revolvers, situated on the plantations of *Chabanon, La Chevallerie, Bullet, Duplat, Charitte, Denort, Dagout, and Galifet*; in each of which *many female white prisoners were set at liberty*. It is from them, Sirs, that we learnt to what an excess the revolvers had carried their brutality.

Your sensibility, already excited, could not endure the narrative of those horrid scenes which these women witnessed.

From the rebel prisoners, we discovered that the different chiefs of these banditti are at bitter enmity with each other; every troop forms a party, and these parties are always at variance, always ready for mutual destruction. The authority they have established is absolute despotism. The chiefs exercise unheard-of tyranny over those they command: the least disobedience, the slightest sign of hesitation, is punished with death; and it is a notorious truth, that more negroes have been sacrificed to their own ignorant rage and suspicion than we have been compelled to destroy in our defence, although we have obtained over them several signal advantages. Their acts of cruelty fall even on those

* These districts have all been since ravaged and destroyed.

† Governor General.

who have voluntarily engaged in the revolt. But who will not shudder to hear in what manner they punish those who determine to remain faithful to their masters! — They seize them by force and roast them at the next fire. They have been seen, with the cruelty of cowards, placing, in the front of battle, the aged, the infants, and the women; and, finding them unfit for action, making use of them to parry our blows. Have they any wounded, and for want of surgeons cannot dress their wounds? — they confine them in a hut and set fire to it. In short, take this for certain; — if the sanguinary designs of these uncivilised and ferocious men should be realised in respect to the whites; should they accomplish the extermination of the Europeans in the colony; soon would you see St. Domingo presenting a picture of all the atrocities of Africa. Subjected to the most arbitrary masters, distracted by the most bloody wars, they would render their prisoners subservient to their caprices; and the moderated servitude, under which they are held by us, would be exchanged for a slavery, aggravated by all the refinements of barbarism.

In the deplorable situation we have described, *M. Blanchelande*, who acted in concurrence with the General Assembly, thought it right to suggest a proclamation which might contribute to bring back the revolters to their duty. The General Assembly, composed of planters perfectly acquainted with the character of the negroes, represented to him the danger of such a proclamation, and positively refused it their sanction. The week following, *M. Blanchelande* renewed his proposal. The same motives dictated the same refusal. He persisted, and determined to issue it in his own name, and he did it, because he learned that the negroes were willing to submit themselves. The proclamation was made, and delivered by twelve dragoons. What effect was produced by this measure? Seven of them were assassinated in the camp of the rebels, and the others saved themselves with the utmost difficulty.

It would answer no end, Sirs, to describe to you all the horrors to which our unfortunate fellow-citizens have been a prey. Posterity will be shocked at so many cruelties, committed in the names of philosophy and liberty.

Yet have we only, in this relation, sketched to you some scattered outlines of the dreadful picture of those evils, which have visited, probably still visit, a country, but lately so peaceful, so flourishing, so valuable to the French empire! You will better judge by a summary of the losses which the colony had experienced at the period of our departure.

They reckoned, in the parishes of Plaisance, Port Margot, Limbé, Marmelade, Acul, la Plaine du Nord, la Petite Anse, Morin, Limonade, Sainte Susanne, Moka, Cottellettes, Great River, Dondon, and other districts, more than two hundred sugar-works, twelve hundred coffee works, many indigo-works, entirely burned down; numerous potteries, distilleries, many considerable villages, public magazines, an immense quantity of merchandise, had shared the same fate. By adding to these inappreciable objects, all the instruments of husbandry, utensils for manufactures, household-furniture, and specie; horses, mules, and other cattle; some idea

may

may be formed of the enormity of our losses, which we value at upwards of six hundred millions of livres. The assistance of the nation, the exertions of commerce; and our industry, may, perhaps, repair them: but what shall dry the tears that flow for more than one thousand of our fellow-citizens slaughtered, the victims of this cruel revolt! Can sensibility be mute, when we reflect, that fifteen thousand negroes will be destroyed before order and tranquillity can be re-established, and that, should they succeed in their projects, St. Domingo will become the tomb of fifty thousand Frenchmen!*

Hitherto we have only spoken of the misfortunes of the Northern parts. They are not all we have to lament. Blood was spilt in the Western province; fire destroyed several properties there; the gangs of *Grandfonds*, *Charboniere*, and *Fond Ferrier*, revolted.

The detection of a conspiracy at Leogane preserved that district from carnage and conflagration, as well as those Archaie, Des Vases, and le Cul de Sac. Jeremie experienced some commotions, but a timely arrest of the excitors of them saved that place from the impending evil.

The Southern parts had also great cause of alarm. The precautions taken there had, to the time of our departure, maintained their tranquillity; yet the population there is so thin, that the measures employed are more the proofs of timidity than the pledges of security.

Thus, Sirs, you behold on every side the colony threatened; and, if there be colonists who are yet to be saved from so many complicated dangers, still will they have to contend with treachery and famine, with epidemical diseases caused by so many unburied carcases in a burning climate, with disorders more acute, the effects of fatigue, terror, and vexation; in a word, with every evil that nature engenders for the destruction of mankind. What just reason have we not to dread the total ruin of the colony, a ruin which must accelerate that of the mother-country! The destruction of our plantations will cause the stagnation of your manufactories, successive bankruptcies will injure pub-

* The following are extracts from an authentic account of the calamities of this unfortunate colony, published, in December last, by Mr. Baillio, a French gentleman, a few days after his arrival at Paris from St. Domingo.

"Several journals have taken incredible pains to soften the representation of this mass of horrors. I can affirm that the General Assembly, whose meetings I attended till the 21st of October, had, at the close of the preceding month, received a particular account of the destruction of two hundred and twenty-two sugar-estates and between eleven and twelve hundred coffee-plantations, and it could not then be known how far the mischief had extended itself among the hills, with which the town of the Cape could no longer maintain any communication.

"The number of white men, women, and children, whose throats had been cut or who had been otherwise butchered, by the negroes, then amounted to more than two thousand, and not to six hundred only, as the journals of the pretended philanthropists assert.

"It would be too irksome a task to enumerate the acts of cruelty committed by the revolted:—those barbarians, in whose favour a certain sect of philosophers so warmly interest themselves! All the white, and even the mulatto, children have in many places been murdered without pity, and most frequently before the eyes, or clinging to the bosom, of their mothers. The young women indeed have not been murdered before they have satisfied the brutal lust of these savages, and been abused in too shameful a manner for the pen to describe. Infants impaled on the ends of pikes have been their ensigns. The Sieur Blin, (an officer of police,) was nailed to one of the gates of a plantation, and his limbs, one by one, cut off: others have been tied between two planks and sawed asunder." *Mot de Vérité. Pa-*

ges 47 51

lic

lic credit, and, even in Paris, will be felt by the moneyed man and the tradesman; in the inmost of your provinces it will check the collection of taxes; the decrease of shipping in the sea-ports will reduce to beggary an innumerable body of labourers and of seamen: then will cries of rage and despair ascend from every quarter, calling upon you for justice against the authors of so many calamities; and can they fail to be detected, by the perfidious cunning, by the cruel perseverance, with which they have so long been contriving a catastrophe, now so terribly conspicuous!

We passed our lives in tranquillity, Sirs, in the midst of our slaves. A paternal government had, for many years past, meliorated the condition of our negroes; and we dare affirm, that millions of Europeans, attacked by every want, subject to every misery, possess fewer enjoyments than those who have been represented to you, and to the world in general, as loaded with chains and perishing by a dilatory death. The situation of the negroes, in Africa, without property, without political or civil existence, continually a prey to the weak capricious fury of tyrants, who divide among them that vast uncivilized country, is changed in our colonies for a condition of comfort and enjoyment. They are deprived of nothing; for, liberty, which, it is true, they have not, is a plant that has never yet proved fertile in their native soil; and, whatever the spirit of party may assert, whatever imagination may invent, well-informed men are not to be persuaded that the negroes in Africa have the enjoyment of freedom. The traveller,* who has most recently visited a part, hitherto almost unknown, of that extensive country, has given us, in his long and interesting work, a history only of blood and desolation. The men who inhabit *Abyssinia*, *Nubia*, the *Galla*, and the *Funge*, from the coasts of the Indian ocean to the very frontiers of Egypt, seem to rival, in ferocity and barbarity, the hyenas and the tigers which nature has there created. Slavery is, with them, a title of honour; and life, in those horrible climates, is a possession unprotected by any laws, and held only at the will of a sanguinary despot.

Let any man, of feeling and information, compare the deplorable state of the negroes, in Africa, with the mild and comfortable lot they enjoy in our colonies; let him set aside declamation, the pictures which a false philosophy has been pleased to delineate; (far more from a pursuit of popularity than from zeal in the vindication of humanity;) let him recal the regulations which governed our negroes before they were seduced and alienated from us; provided against every want; supplied with accommodations, unknown in the greater part of the cottages of Europe; secure in the enjoyment of their properties; (*for, they had property, and it was sacred*;) nursed, in times of sickness, with an expense and an attention which may be sought in vain in the much-boasted hospitals of England: protected, respected, in the infirmities of old age; at ease in respect to their children, their families, and their affections; subjected to a labour calculated according to the strength of each individual, because individuals and employments were classed; and interest (even should humanity fail) enjoined an attention to the

* Vide Bruce, ii. 216, iv. 459, &c.

preservation of their numbers; enfranchised whenever they had merited it by important services.—Such was the just, unflattered, picture of the government of our negroes; and this domestic government had been meliorated (particularly in the last ten years) with an anxiety, of which you will find no example in Europe. The sincerest attachment connected the master and his slaves. We slept in security in the midst of men that were become our children, and many of us had neither locks nor bars to our houses.

Not, Sirs, that we would disguise to you, that there did exist, among the planters, a very small number of hard and ferocious masters. But what was the lot of these wicked men? Blasted in their fame, detested by men of character, outcasts of society, discredited in their business, they lived in disgrace and dishonour, and died in misery and despair. Their names are never pronounced without indignation in the colony, and the bad estimation in which they are held serves as a warning to those, who, yet unversed in the management of their slaves, might be led, by the impetuosity of their tempers, into excesses, proved, by experience, to be as contrary to good policy, as they are, by increase of knowledge and humanity, become infamous.

Here we appeal, not to those who write romances to gain a name as men of sensibility, to acquire a momentary popularity, soon to be wrested from them by general indignation, but to those who have visited, who know, the colonies. Let *them* say if the recital we have made is faithful, or if we have coloured it to interest you in our cause.

We repeat it, Sirs, we passed our lives in this state of tranquillity and happiness, and we returned to the mother-country, the protectress of our properties, the entire tribute of our produce, which was applied in adding to the wealth of the metropolis, to her internal strength, and to her superiority in foreign commerce.

Meantime, Sirs, a society springs up in the bosom of France,* and prepares, at a distance, the destruction and convulsions to which we are now a prey. Unobtrusive and modest in their outset, they professed only a desire to alleviate the lot of our slaves; but that alleviation, already so far advanced in the French islands, must result from means which were totally unknown to this society, although they were objects of our unceasing attention, until obliged to abandon them, by these incompetent meddlers having excited, among our slaves, a spirit of mutiny, and, among us, a spirit of distrust.

In order to meliorate gradually the lot of the slaves, and to increase the number of the emancipated, there should certainly be a previous solicitude of attention to the perfect safety of their masters. But, an expedient so wise would have gained no applause in *their* temple of renown. Vanity commanded that measures of prudence should be relinquished for specious declamations, that we should be surrounded with terror and alarm, and that calamities should be contrived, the same which we have predicted since the earliest proceedings of the *Amis des Noirs*, and which have so lately been realised.

* "A society which foreigners and bad men have instituted for our destruction and for the humiliation of France." *Address of the French planters of St. Domingo to the king.*

On a sudden this society demands an *Abolition of the Slave-Trade*; that is to say, that the profits, which may result from it to the French commerce, should be transferred to foreigners; for, never will their romantic philosophy persuade all the European powers, that it is incumbent upon them to abandon the culture of their colonies, and to leave the natives of Africa a prey to the barbarity of their native tyrants, rather than employ them elsewhere, and under more humane masters, in cultivating a soil, which, without them, must remain uncultivated, and whose valuable productions are, to the nation which possesses them, a fertile source of industry and prosperity.

Combining itself next with the Revolution in France, this society confounds its extravagant and irrational system with the plan which the nation had conceived for its enfranchisement; and, profiting by the universal ardour of all Frenchmen in the cause of liberty, interests them, from the remembrance of their servitude, in its design to put an end to that of the negroes. Its blind enthusiasm, or its perversity, forgets, that those savage men are incapable of knowing in what true social liberty consists, or of enjoying it with moderation; and that the rash law, which should destroy their prejudices, would be, to them and to us, a sentence of death.

Thenceforwards, this society, or at least some of its members, have given an unbounded loose to their enterprise; all means have seemed to them good, so they might but tend to its accomplishment. The open attack, the deep and studied inuendo, the basest and most despicable calumnies, have been practised to forward their designs; ingeniously mixing cunning with audacity, the society, at one time, flatters us by an invitation to shake off the yoke of the French merchants, assuring us of its support if we will unite with it for obtaining a free commerce; at another time, it arms the mercantile body against us, affirming that we have in view a disgraceful bankruptcy, a chimerical independence, and that, in our career of vanity, we would build up a separate power on a level with that of France. Thus, after having endeavoured to irritate the planters and the merchants against each other, after having offered us principles incompatible with the interests of the mother-country, when, in spite of its insidious counsels, we have declined to adopt them, still are we accused, by the society, of such intentions, and they lay hold of the declaration of the *Rights of Man*, an immortal work, and beneficial to highly enlightened men; but inapplicable, and therefore dangerous, to our colonial regulations: they send it with profusion into our colonies; the journals in their pay, or under their influence, publish this declaration in the midst of our gangs; the writings of the *Amis des Noirs* openly announce, that the freedom of the negroes is proclaimed by the declaration of rights.

The decree of the 8th of March* seemed calculated to check these desperate plots. But can the *Amis des Noirs* reverence any law but those oaths by which they are bound together, and that vow which they have formed to carry fire and sword into our habitations? If a law be favourable to their theories, they adopt, they promulgate, they

* A decree, which left internal regulations, for the most part, under control of the colonial legislatures.

interpret,
it, witho
it is foun

The pl
of their j
enough th
our peace.
send ourse

gent of th
nion, shu
city the m
snares, a

When
aining f
they atte
Assembly
lour. V
this subj
tion. W
mane.

But, t
have ete
ing betw
Amis des
table stip

Other
ther at E
ings; th
These m
sioned by
with wh
pamphle
neral inf

Ogé w
led by h
that, ha
conspirat
upon the
devastati
ring-lea
was the
last that

In the
the whit
were inc
cussion o
shoal of
among c

* This
of March,

Slave-Trade;

to the French will their ro-
it is incum-
and to leave
tive tyrants,
ane masters,
uncultivated,
offesses them,

this society

e plan which

profiting by

ty; interests

design to put

is perversity;

in what true

and that the

be, to them

mbers, have

have seemed

The open

st despicable

ingeniously

flatters us

chants, assu-

a free com-

ainst us, af-

chimerical

d build up a

after having

inst each o-

the interests

els, we have

ty; of such

hts of Man,

en; but in-

tions: they

their pay, or

our gangs;

e freedom of

check these

ny law but

ow which

ions? If a

lgate, they

of the colonial

interpret,

interpret, that law. If repugnant, they misconstrue, disavow, insult,
it, without shame; they endeavour to degrade the authority on which
it is founded.

*The planters, merchants, and men enlightened enough not to be the dupes
of their falsities, are indiscriminately the objects of their abuse. It is not
enough that they have made themselves the arbiters of our property and
our peace, they assume over us a supremacy of defamation; nor may we de-
fend ourselves, and strive to parry their blows, without undergoing a tor-
rent of their low scurrility. Thus, prejudicing against us the public opi-
nion, shutting up from us the channels of defence, they undermine in secu-
rity the rock on which our possessions are placed; they surround it with
snares, and our ruin must follow!*

When it was found that they had vainly flattered themselves with ob-
taining from the National Assembly the emancipation of our slaves,
they attempted to introduce dissention among us, by persuading that
Assembly to take on itself to discuss the question of the *People of Co-
lour*. We had demanded that *we should ourselves make the laws upon
this subject, which require great delicacy and prudence in their applica-
tion*. We had pledged ourselves that those laws should be just and hu-
mane.

But, that boon, which, then granted by the white planters, would
have eternally cemented the ties of affection and benevolence exist-
ing between those low classes of men, is presented to them, by the
Amis des Noirs, as an offering of vanity, and a means of avoiding equi-
table stipulations.

Other measures were tried to gain their point: they collected toge-
ther at Paris some people of colour; they extolled their understand-
ings; they invited them to unite their cause with that of the negroes.
These men passed over to St Domingo, in the sort of delirium occa-
sioned by such doctrine; they communicated to the slaves those hopes
with which they had been amused; they were loaded with libels and
pamphlets, which encouraged the men of colour and the slaves to a ge-
neral insurrection, and to a general massacre of the whites.

Ogé was the first victim of this fatal error; one of his brothers, mis-
led by him, declared, the 9th of March, in his death-bed testimony,
that, had not the swelling of the rivers prevented the junction of the
conspirators, eleven thousand rebel negroes were ready to pour down
upon the Cape so early as the month of February, and to cause the
devastation which took place only the 23d of August. He named the
ring-leaders, gave particulars of the conspiracy, and offered proof. It
was the voice of his conscience which spoke out at that moment, the
last that remained to him for discovering the truth.

In the midst of this fermentation, in this general delirium, while
the whites were agitated by distrust and terror, and while the negroes
were indulging themselves in a thousand fatal dreams, was the dis-
cussion of the decree of the 15th of May agitated among you.* A
shoal of writings, previous and subsequent, have been disseminated
among our gangs. There have been read, and commented upon,

* This decree was formed on principles directly opposite to those of the decree of the 8th
of March,

those

those terrible words! those words, the signal of blood and conflagration!

PERISH THE COLONIES. †

It was then that a Minister of the Gospel of Peace, in a letter, addressed to his brethren, the Men of Colour, announced to our slaves, that *soon should the sun shine on none but freemen!* ‡

Could the negroes, — assailed by so many temptations, — worked upon by so many manœuvres, — stimulated by libels, written in characters of blood, read at evenings in their huts, in the midst of assemblies of their chiefs, by men breathing only disorder and pillage: — Could they long resist the vertigo with which they were stricken? — All memory of the kindness of their masters was erased from their minds; a desire of novelty was all they felt; they became the apt instruments of those men, inveterately malevolent, who have greedily seized, in the writings of the *Amis des Noirs* and in the interpretation of decrees, such arms as were best suited to lead the way to insurrection.

Is our measure of misfortune sufficiently full, that we may hope at last to have the truth no more disguised? Have we a valid claim to the retribution of the laws, without waiting those proofs, which must result from the proceedings now on-foot at St. Domingo, and which will be transmitted to us? The fatal influence of the authors of so

† The words used by M. Robertspierre, in the National Assembly, when attempting to prove that the declaration of rights implied an enfranchisement of all the negroes in the colonies. "Let the colonies perish," said he, "rather than one of our principles!" His speech was printed; and, with many other writings of similar tendency, was disseminated in St. Domingo. Vide appendix (E.)

‡ This is the expression of the Abbé Grégoire, the most zealous and active of the society of the *Amis des Noirs*. — M. Baillio, in the pamphlet before quoted, says: "He is looked upon as at the Cape in the light he deserves, and it is upon him the resentment of the planters particularly falls." — "In one of his writings he seems to foretel the ruin of the colonies, of the maritime towns, and manufactories, in consequence of an emancipation of the negroes. 'Unworthy mortals, exclaims this holy man,' 'Eat grass, and be just.' 'Hear this, ye industrious planters, ye numerous seamen, inhabitants of the sea-ports, cultivators, manufacturers, all ye four millions of Frenchmen who directly and indirectly live and prosper by the rich productions of the colonies!' 'Eat grass!' 'So prays the pious Abbé Grégoire. — Foulon, the detestable Foulon, wished also that the people of Paris might live upon bay, and therefore was his hideous head borne upon a pike. The justice of the colonists has hitherto only emblematically overtaken the abbé. He was hanged in effigy, before the post-office at Cape François, in July last." Baillio, *Mot de Vérité*, pages 8, 9.

"Many of the mulattoes had established a correspondence with considerable persons in France; from some of whom, particularly the Abbé Grégoire, letters of a very extraordinary tendency were received and distributed through the colony. In one of these letters, after promising protection and support, the abbé declares, that 'the day will soon come when the sun shall shine upon free people only.' — 'The beams of the morning,' says he, 'shall no longer give light to the fetters of slavery.' These and similar expressions were exaggerated into one point: that the King had given freedom to all the slaves in St. Domingo; and the Abbé Grégoire, so whose good offices this benevolence was imputed, was immediately considered as the patron of all the mulattoes and negroes in the island: It is no wonder, therefore, that, considering their masters unjustly to withhold from them those privileges which they believed were granted them in France, they determined to do justice to themselves by murdering their oppressors. The above conjecture is confirmed by the following circumstance:

"In the first of the engagements, one of the chiefs of the rebels being killed, there was found about his neck a medal of San Gregorio, a Saint in the Romish calendar; and it appeared in evidence that this medal was worn by the negro as the portrait of his patron, the abbé: the similarity of the name giving countenance to the conceit. An impression of this medal is now in the possession of B. E. Esq. It has this description: SAN GREGORIO MAGNO, P. M."

Particulars of the insurrection in St. Domingo, printed in the *Jamaica news-papers*, but for obvious reasons suppressed in that island.

many

many calamities, — is it not already evidently proved by the whole of their transactions and by their criminal writings? Can it be doubted, at this time, that our ruin is *their* work? And shall France still restrain the cry of indignation, due to the guilt of our enemies?

Flattered with hopes that misfortunes like ours would find consolation in the bosom of the mother-country, — that, on our arrival in the capital, where we have at least a claim to pity, the hearts of our fellow-citizens would be open to our complaints, — we find ourselves preceded by calumny! They, who have made light of our properties and our blood, reckoned upon being objects of our bitter reproaches, and have endeavoured to anticipate them. Skilled in the arts of defamation, which are habitual to them, after having rendered us the victims of their machinations, it remained to cast upon us the reproach and the shame. With a cruelty, equalled only by their disregard for probability, they have dared to fabricate and to report, that our constituents were themselves the contrivers of their own afflictions! they have dared to affirm, that the absurd and barbarous project of effecting a Counter-Revolution was the object, to which they have sacrificed their properties, their families, their lives! They have dared to say that we wished to offer ourselves to Great-Britain!

In return, we will ask of you, Sirs, with the boldness of Freemen and of French Citizens, (for, after all, we too are Frenchmen and Citizens,) we will ask of you, whether it be permitted to any set of men, of any nation upon earth, to insult, with such effrontery, those whom they have injured!

What! *We* place fire and sword in the hands of our negroes! *We* light the torch that has destroyed our plantations! *We* sharpen the daggers that have assassinated our brethren and our friends! *We* prompt the brutal passions of which our females have been the hapless victims! *We* kindle in our country the volcano which has already covered it with ashes, and which perhaps will reduce it to nothing!

These desolators, calling themselves patriots, accuse us of having plotted a counter-revolution. They are then uninformed, that, from the earliest days of the Revolution, it has had our veneration; and that, as being more exposed under a despotic government to oppression, we have, with greater ardour, sprung towards liberty. Our most recent transactions testify in our favour. Is it the act of a counter-revolutionist to have declared, in constituting our Assembly, that "*We*" would protect, with all the power of the law and of public opinion, the recovery of the debts due to the mother-country? Is it the act of a counter-revolutionist to have there recorded, that to the National Assembly belongs the right of instituting our political and commercial regulations?

Is it the act of a counter-revolutionist to have written to the representatives of the nation, while the grave was opening beneath our feet, that our last sigh and our last vow should be for our country?*

* "*We* will not inform you what cause has produced our calamities: you ought sufficiently to be acquainted with it. — That which you will learn from us is, that, if we must perish, our last eyes shall be turned towards France — our last wishes shall be for her."

First Address, to the National Assembly, by the members of the General Assembly of the French part of St. Domingo.

P. DE CADUSCH, president.

Had

Had we been counter-revolutionists, is it to the National Assembly we should have addressed such sentiments?

It is asserted, it is printed and published, that we wished to offer ourselves to Great Britain. — Our reply to this falsehood is very simple, it is written in every page of our verbal process. There we have manifested our principles, and, we can safely affirm, the full performance of our duty.

But we will go yet farther: permit us an hypothesis, which our situation, singular in the records of history, authorises us to state.

At the moment of the insurrection breaking out, all the inhabitants of the town of the Cape were anxious to discover the cause of an event so horrible.

A journalist had printed the decrees of the 13th and 15th of May last, with the speech of *M. Monneron*, deputy of the Isle of France. The first depositions stated, that these papers, with all those of the pretended philanthropists, were read and commented upon, by a mulatto upon *Normand's* plantation, in the nocturnal assemblies where the negro-drivers met, who are now the ring-leaders of the rebels. We learnt that the town of the Cape was to be included in the conflagration, and that within that town were lurking those who were to set it on fire and massacre all its inhabitants. Immediately a cry of rage and despair arose on all sides. The philanthropists, France itself, were accused of this dreadful plot: distraction and fury were impressed on every countenance; every heart was in agitation; every thing menaced a horrible butchery, a general confusion. Already the report of musquets was heard! Negroes and mulattoes received their contents at the very door of the General Assembly. Some assumed a white cockade, some loudly called for the protection of the English, some assumed a black cockade. Those words, *The Nation, the Law, and the King*, disappeared from the hall which was preparing for the General Assembly; a hand, bewildered by rage, obliterated them. Exclamations were heard, that the government at home had yielded us to the murderer's sword, to the torch of incendiaries! that, in short, they had delivered us over to every human crime in one day, believed to be the last of the colony! Furious voices blasphemed against a country, to whom they were indebted — not for their protection — but their death!

In the midst of this frenzy, of which no power could repress the first effusion, the General Assembly was yet attentive to measures of security. The moments were precious. A proclamation was issued, forbidding, under pain of death, any one to take away another's life. Four of the members made it public even whilst it was writing. These commissioners carried it from place to place; and met, in every place, mobs, and shouts, and even insults; but they succeeded in saving the mulattoes, who, being accused, would otherwise have been massacred; and their care and their intreaties suspended the fury of the people.

[The remaining part in our next. The original French may be had at the European Magazine Warehouse, No. 32, Cornhill; and another interesting Tract on this subject, intitled *Sur les Troubles des Colonies, et l'unique Moyend'assurer la Tranquillité, la Prospérité, et la Fidélité, de ces Dépendances de l'Empire, en Réfutation des deux Discours de M. Brissot des 1er et 3me Décembre, 1791, par M. Dumonier.*]

[Concluded from our last.]

A new alarm was suggested. The General Assembly was accused of participating in the crime of the people of colour, and was threatened. Its courage remained unabated. The mulattoes offered to arm themselves for the common defence; and to leave as hostages their wives and children. The Assembly ventured to arm them, and, uniting them with the soldiers of the regiment of the Cape, thus converted into defenders those who had been nearly sacrificed as enemies.

At this violent crisis, which betokened a subversion of all things; if, giving way to impressions so calculated to inspire terror, we had experienced its effects; if, like those who surrounded and threatened us at that moment, we had regarded our country in no other light than as the cause of our misfortunes; if we had called in a foreign power to snatch the colonists from their butchers, to save their properties, to preserve the very credit of the metropolis: — Where is that man, having a conscience, who would have dared to condemn us? — Yet were we still Frenchmen! — And shall we, after this, be reduced to the abject necessity of justifying ourselves from the reproach of having aimed at independence? Let them examine all our acts: if there be a single one that tends to loosen us from those indissoluble ties which attach us to the empire; our heads are here to suffer the punishment due to such perfidy. We know that some captains of ships, whose vanity has been wounded because their inhumanity was made public, have been ready to join the *Amis des Noirs* in finding us guilty; but the groans of dejected commerce, feeling for our calamities and for their consequences, shall teach them their error; and that, should they succeed in rendering us odious by their calumnies, they will themselves have, ere long, to lament their success.

True, we have asked, we glory in having asked, (for, it was the duty of men invested with a trust by their fellow-citizens,) assistance from all who surrounded us! That assistance we implored in concert with the Governor-General, and therefore, as Frenchmen and as men, and since, without distinction, we applied at the same time to three different nations, we have sufficiently proved that our solicitations, the dictates of misfortune, could cover no project inimical to the mother-country. Who, indeed, will dare accuse us for having had recourse to the English of Jamaica, since the National Assembly (then informed of our calamities and of our dangers only by imperfect reports) thought fit, of itself, to express the national gratitude to that generous people!*

But even, Sirs, had we called in the English, not to lend us assistance but to govern us, to whom ought the guilt to be imputed? Place, for a moment, in our situation, that department of the kingdom which you believe to be the most patriotic, the most proud of the appellation of Frenchmen; — suppose that the sowers of sedition had stirred up, in its bosom, servants against masters — banditti against possessors of property; — that a hundred times the peaceable inhabitants had remonstrated against such practices with no return but con-

* Vide appendix (C.)

tempt; — that, so far from receiving succour from the mother-country, all that issued from its bosom seemed to teem with the seeds of revolt; — that already the houses and properties of a multitude of citizens had fallen a prey to the disturbances; — that they had seen the most abominable murders committed under their eyes; — that they were hopeless of protection; — if, at such a time, so destitute and abandoned, these hapless citizens should have indulged an idea of forming new connections and of imploring the assistance of another country: — To whom think you, Sirs, ought the reproach to be made? To wretches, bewildered by despair? or to the miscreants, who took pleasure in wearing out their patience, and in breaking asunder the dearest and most sacred ties by an excess of misery?

We know our duty, Sirs, and we love it; but we know too and boldly claim our rights. We dedicate, to the prosperity of the mother-country, the entire produce of our labours. She owes us protection against foreign force; she owes us the security of our properties and peace against the plots of the turbulent.

It is now proved that the influence of the *Amis des Noirs* is fatal to the colonies.* Let them weave what sophisms they please, they cannot hide the evidence of our calamities. There is not an unprejudiced man existing who can doubt, that their labours, their declamations, their writings, their infamous emissaries, have been the active, persevering, cause, which, for two years past, has paved the way for our ruin, and which at length has succeeded!

France owes us protection; but her strength will be insufficient to give us confidence, while she suffers the contrivers of our revolts and massacres to lurk in her bosom.

She owes us protection; but in vain would she render it effective, if such attempts are to remain unpunished; that, which ought to disgrace our enemies, affords them matter of triumph and exultation.

She owes us protection; but to what end her fleets and her armies, if she permit that seditious writings should incessantly scatter in our houses the seeds of every trouble! if she permit us to be pressed down to the earth with humiliations! and if to encompass us with murder and with blood become, in the eyes of the country to whom we sacrifice ourselves, the road to glory and to fame!

* The society of the *Amis des Noirs* has been very anxious to parry the accusation of having fomented the troubles in St. Domingo: to say nothing of their absurd crimination of the colonists as disaffected to the new constitution, and as having plotted a counter-revolution at the expence of every thing, which, under any form of government, could be worthy their preservation, it has been industriously spread abroad, that the injustice of the whites to the men of colour has been the sole cause of this insurrection. Doubtless the ill blood occasioned by various contradictory decrees, some exciting, some repressing, the expectations of the men of colour, has had its share in bringing this calamitous business to a crisis. But to whom is it owing that the National Assembly took at any time from the Colonial Assemblies the right of framing their own internal regulations? To the speeches and representations of the most violent of the *Amis des Noirs*. By whom have the pretensions of the men of colour been suddenly elevated to an extravagant height, subversive of all ancient usages, prejudices, and of the harmony of the colony? By the *Amis des Noirs*, and principally by the Abbé Grégoire in his famous circular letters. And, in a word, to what could those levelling doctrines tend, which the writings of the *Amis des Noirs* have industriously disseminated in the colonies; but first to set the whites and the men of colour by the ears, and then to make these last the instruments of an insurrection of the slaves? See appendix (A.) (B.) (D.) and (E.)

Forgive, Sirs, the warmth of our language. So many calamities have given us a privilege to speak out. Grief, bitter grief, is at our hearts! A hundred times have we foretold the evils of which we are the victims — a hundred times have we imprecated the public vengeance on the hateful manœuvres of those men, who convulse our country under the mask of humanity: — We have obtained no redress! Oh! may the dreadful catastrophe, of which we have sketched to you the picture, serve as a lesson for futurity, and preserve, from like calamities, all those of our fellow-citizens to whose lot they have not yet fallen!

It is to your steadiness, in punishing the authors of our disasters, and in checking their new efforts, that the Western and Southern provinces have to look for their security.

As for the Northern province, its losses are irreparable. Immense capitals are sunk; the restoration of its industry requires such an advance of funds as the merchants and proprietors cannot wholly accomplish. We speak not to you of individuals; but you will examine, Sirs, what, on your part, is required by the interest of the colony and that of the nation.

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PEOPLE OF FRANCE, you have heard a recital of the greatest calamity that has visited the human race in the course of the eighteenth century.

You have heard the complaint of the first colony in the world; of a colony necessary to the existence of that nation whose concerns are placed in your hands.* That colony wishes to interest you only by its feelings and its sufferings!

It demands, from you, JUSTICE, SAFETY, SUCCOUR!

Signed, J. B. MILLET.
COUGNACQ MION.
SAINTE-JAMES.
CHENEAU DE LA MEGRIERE,
LA-GOURGUE.
LE BUCQUET.

REPLY of the PRESIDENT.

TO love our country is a source of heart-felt satisfaction! To serve it in time of distress is the first of civic virtues, and it is yours! The calamities of the colony are dreadful! The National Assembly views them with horror, with indignation, with grief! You ask its JUSTICE; that is due from it to all the citizens of the empire. Its PROTECTION; that is due to your courage, your patriotism, your misfortunes! Its SUCCOUR; that it is already occupied in providing. It will give your application its most serious attention, and invites you to the honours of the session.

* See appendix (D.) and (E.)

REPLY OF THE DEPUTIES OF ST. DOMINGO TO THE CHARGES OF M. BRISSOT.

*Addressed, on the 5th of December, to the President of the National Assembly.**

MR. PRESIDENT,

AT the bar of the National Assembly we have pointed out the society of the *Amis des Noirs* as the instigators of the troubles in St. Domingo. No candid and well-informed man can doubt the fact. Yet M. Brissot, one of the members of that society which has been incessantly busied in the ruin of the colonies, dares accuse us of having ourselves excited the insurrection of our slaves; that we might call in a foreign power to our aid and protection; and, as if the treason existed and was proved, he two days ago moved that the General Assembly of St. Domingo should be summoned before the Supreme National Court. Incumbered by the weight of those evils which he has brought upon his country, he seeks to divert the public attention from himself; he would interest the representatives of the Nation in his personal defence; he hopes to mislead the justice of the National Assembly, that he may shelter himself from its decrees. *We challenge him, Mr. President, to exhibit his proofs. We intreat the National Assembly to require them. And, as for us, intrusted by a great colony with the duty of prosecuting its vengeance, we will bring forward, upon the question, such an accumulation of evidence as shall leave neither to the public opinion nor to the sentence of the law any room to hesitate in distinguishing the guilty.*

We are, respectfully,

MR. PRESIDENT,

Your, &c.

Signed, J. B. MILLET,
COUGNACQ MION.
SAINTE-JAMES.
CHENAU DE LA MEGRIERE.
LA-GOURGUE.
LE BUCQUET.

15 MA 56

* This letter was, on the morning of the 5th of December, delivered by two of the deputies to the president; the secretary, who had his orders to lay it before the assembly, thought proper to defer its reading till the next day.

APPEN-

APPENDIX.

(A.)

Extracts from the Address of the St. Domingo Planters, assembled at Paris, to the King, Dec. 11, 1791.

ON the first report of our calamities, France has seen those men, whose philosophy is a dagger and whose virtue is a flaming torch, setting their writers and their clubs to work to counteract that impression of pity which our situation was calculated to inspire; and, at the very moment of the accomplishment of their prophetic vow, "Perish the Colonies rather than our Principles!" *M. Condorcet* published, in his Journal, "that the accounts were fabricated, and had no other object than to create, to the king of the French, an empire beyond the seas, in which there should be masters and in which there should be slaves."

When the news was confirmed, when the manufacturers, the seamen, ship-owners, and the whole commercial body of the kingdom, discovered their alarm, the anti-social sect (through its organ, *Mr. Brissot*) exclaimed, that the blood of our brethren, and the ashes of our habitations, covered a crime of high treason; and this friend of humanity proposed to summon, before the High National Court, whatever remnant of the planters should be left unmurdered by the negroes.

These horrid proposals were agitated, discussed, in the National Assembly. Perhaps it was the first time that a civilized people have suffered, in a legal form, the impious assault of guilt against misfortune.

The contempt, consequent on such charges, obliged them to shift their ground. — The colonial regulations are inimical to their levelling system. — Sworn enemies are they to all great property: for, they spurn, they persecute, they would annihilate, all wealth and all authority in which they cannot participate. Their hypocrisy would preserve sacred the rights only of that multitude of which they are the despots. Therefore the people of colour, in the colonies, were, for them, fit instruments, into whose hands they must put arms, and they have succeeded!

Such, *Sire*, is the origin of our calamities. It is rendered obvious by successive facts, from the first insurrection of the mulatto *Ogé*, to the devastation of the plain of the Cape plotted by the accomplices of *Ogé*.

(B.)

Extract from an Address of the same Planters to the National Assembly.

IT is absurd to believe, that those, who have tried every means to abolish slavery and the slave-trade, have a single measure to propose, friendly in its nature, to those very colonies which cannot subsist without slavery and the slave-trade.

It is absurd to believe, that those, who declare themselves enemies of the white planters because *they* have negro-slaves, should have taken up the cause of the people of colour, who *also* have negro-slaves, for any other purpose than that of setting the whites and the people of colour together by the ears, of making them cut one another's throats, in order to secure the freedom of the negroes, who would remain sole masters of the territory. — These are the beneficent projects of these friends of humanity!

(C.)

Extract from the Journal of the Colonial Assembly of the French Part of Hispaniola, Sept. 26, 1791.

THE committee, appointed to repair on-board the English frigate, reported, "That Commodore Affleck, and Bryan Edwards, Esq. member of the Jamaica Assembly, attended to be presented;" who were accordingly admitted, in company with the Governor-General; whereupon the President addressed them as follows:

"We were not mistaken, Gentlemen, when we placed our confidence in your generosity; but we could hardly entertain the hopes, that, besides sending us succours, you would come in person to give us consolation. — You have quitted, without reluctance, the peaceful enjoyment of happiness at home, to come and participate in our misfortunes and blend your tears with ours. Scenes of misery (the contemplation of which, to those who are unaccustomed to misfortune, is commonly disgusting) have not suppressed *your* feelings. You have been willing to ascertain the full extent of our distresses, and to pour into our wounds the salutary balm of your sensibility and compassion.

"The picture which I have drawn of our calamities is still far short of the truth.

"That verdure, with which our fields were lately arrayed, is no longer visible; discoloured by the flames, and laid waste by the devastations of war, our coasts exhibit no prospect but that of horror,

"ror. The emblems which we wear on our persons* are the tokens
 "of our grief for the loss of our brethren, who were surprised, and
 "basely assassinated, by the revolvers.

"It is by the light of these conflagrations, that every way surround
 "us, that we now deliberate; we are compelled to sit armed and
 "watchful, through the night, to keep the enemy from our sanctu-
 "ary. For a long time past our bosoms have been depressed by sor-
 "row; they experience this day, for the first time, the sweet emo-
 "tions of pleasure, in beholding you among us.

"Generous islanders! humanity has operated powerfully on your
 "hearts; you have yielded to the first emotion of your generosity,
 "in the hopes of snatching us from death; for, it is already too late
 "to save us from misery. What a contrast between your conduct
 "and that of other nations! We will avail ourselves of your bene-
 "volence: but the days you preserve to us will not be sufficient to ma-
 "nifest our gratitude: — Our children shall keep it in remembrance.

"Regenerated France, unapprised that such calamities might be-
 "fal us, has taken no measures to protect us against their effects:
 "with what admiration will she learn, that, without your assistance,
 "we should no longer exist as a dependency to any nation.

"The Commissioner, deputed by us to the island of Jamaica, has
 "informed us of your exertions to serve us. — Receive the assurance
 "of our attachment and sensibility.

"The Governor-general of this island, whose sentiments perfectly
 "accord with our own, and who is strongly attached to the inter-
 "ests of this country, participates equally in the joy we feel at your
 "presence and in our gratitude for the assistance you have brought
 "us."

(D.)

*Extract from the Address of the Merchants and Traders of Amiens
 to the National Assembly, Dec. 10, 1791.*

THE freedom of the negroes in the West-Indies, so eagerly desired
 by the society of the *Amis des Noirs*, has submitted, to public enquiry,
 a question of too much importance, at this time, to be regarded with
 indifference. This question, so closely connected with the commer-
 cial interests of Europe, has divided opinions and formed parties. In
 the eye of reason, both experience and policy unite in dictating, that
 we should abide by the customary regulations; meliorating, if it be
 yet possible, the lot of the negroes.

* The Assembly appeared in white dresses, with black silk sashes. There were upwards of
 two hundred members present.

The pretended philanthropists, not having succeeded in establishing anarchy by means of an unqualified enfranchisement of the negroes, have directed their attention to the men of colour, whom time would naturally have conducted to all the rights of other citizens.

We draw the veil over scenes of horror, the bare recital of which has made you shudder. We leave to journalists, for the most part coldly selfish or irrationally enthusiastic, to reason over them in *their* manner. Let *them* tell us that France, to be prosperous, needs no colonies; that the loss of sugar and coffee is an evil only to wealthy persons who consume them. These are not arguments that will persuade the patriotic citizen, still less the enlightened merchant. Let facts convince us, that France owes her splendour only to her colonies; and that, in the present state of the European nations, France, without her colonies, cannot be supported.

It is needless, Sirs, to fix your attention upon the nature of the French commerce, but, perhaps, it may be necessary to examine what is the basis of its commercial industry; an object so important, that it is the principle of our immense population.

The greater part of our manufactories are nourished by raw materials imported, and which we must purchase from foreigners; and what have we, of the produce of our soil or of the fruits of our industry, to give them in return? Before the establishment of our manufactories, which have so prodigiously augmented the number of consumers, it was politic to export corn, but we now find, by experience, great objections to an export of that article. There remain, then, our wines, brandies, some fruits, a little dried fish, some cattle, and salt; we have also to offer them linens, silks, woollens, cottons, and millinery and haberdashery wares.

Although these different manufactories occasion a considerable export to foreign nations, their amount does not form a compensation for the raw materials, drugs, and dye stuffs, which we are compelled to take from them. Other riches become necessary in order to pay for the surplus and to give a balance advantageous to France. Those riches our colonies supply.

France received annually from her American colonies about 300,000,000 value in their produce, of which about one half was exported. It is by this value that we pay for those materials, which are the support of our manufactures, and for other articles, whether of luxury or of necessity; and, by this value, there accrued to France a balance of trade amounting to between 40 and 50,000,000 of livres.

What becomes of this balance, what becomes of the kingdom, if we lose these invaluable possessions? Should that loss happen from our fault, we have to answer to our brethren, resident in the colonies, who look to the mother-country for protection; we have to answer to the numerous seamen and artificers of all kinds who reside in our sea-ports; we have to answer to all those manufactories of the internal provinces, whose hands are employed by the colonies, or by those connected with them. — How dreadful the prospect!

Similar addresses were presented from Bourdeaux, Nantes, Havre, &c.

(E.)

(E.)

Extract of the Speech of M. ROUSTAN, in the National Assembly, Dec. 10, 1791. (He was deputed, by the Colony of St. Domingo, to ask Succours of the American States.)

BUT, Sirs, by what fatality are all *our* measures to be considered as suspicious? By what fatality are *we* reduced to our justification? *We*, that are the victims, whilst the charges of our enemies, I might say of our executioners, are looked upon as indisputable truths! By what right does M. *Brissot*,* and those other members of the National Assembly, who are ignorant of the internal regulation which is suitable to our own colonies, because that regulation depends on localities that can be known only to the inhabitants, permit themselves to load us with abuse? Whence comes it that, when we require them to bring proof of what they assert, the National Assembly, which has promised us justice, should not compel them to their own vindication; whilst we, on our parts, offer proof of all we have affirmed?

To what an excess of despair shall we not reduce our hapless constituents, when we relate to them, as we must, all that has passed during the discussion of their dreadful situation! What confidence will they derive from a journalist, member of the National Assembly, who publishes, (I quote his own expression,) that those celebrated words, "*Perish the Colonies rather than we should sacrifice a Principle—have been pronounced in vain from the tribunal of the Constituent Assembly.*" Pronounced in vain! then it is the wish, the prayer, of M. *Condorcet*, that these words had not been a fruitless ineffectual declamation. Pronounced in vain! Then he would have had pleasure in seeing a massacre of 50,000 Frenchmen, 20,000 mulattoes, and 500,000 negroes, in the colony of St. Domingo only, rather than have sacrificed what he calls a *principle*. I should conceive myself to be wounding the delicacy of the National Assembly, should I attempt to prove all the horrors these dreadful words convey!

(F.)

Extracts from the Speech of Mr. BERTRAND, Marine Minister of France, in the National Assembly, Dec. 19, 1791.

I HAVE explained to you, Sirs, the measures taken by the king, for affording relief to the inhabitants of St. Domingo, so soon as

* M. Roustan no sooner mentioned the name of M. *Brissot* than there was a great clamour in the Assembly.—Several members exclaimed, "To poison with him!"

their

their calamity and danger were made known to his majesty: inadequate, doubtless, of themselves, their success depends wholly on their promptitude, and on the assurance that they shall be followed by others more effective. But, previous to these being determined upon, it was fitting we should know the true causes of the troubles which have led to this terrible catastrophe. I have neglected no means of discovering them, because by such discovery alone can we be directed in the application of those measures which are to prevent its return.

Some accuse the Colonists of wishing to surrender themselves to the English, &c. &c.*

Others, on the contrary, see no other cause of their misfortunes but in the incendiary writings, disseminated in the Colonies with a view to stir the negroes to revolt; in the correspondence maintained, for some time past, between the people of colour and a society called Philanthropists; founded, say they, upon a system, destructive of all colonial property, and whose origin and principles are thus stated.

It is easy to conceive, that a free people, always worthy of being so, must have felt an alloy to its enjoyment of colonial establishments from the circumstance of their being founded on slavery.

This sentiment of a generous and humane nation (certainly estimable, however just or well founded) was sure to gain ground, and a milder treatment of our negroes was its natural result.

But the philosophic spirit, so prevalent in France, aimed at farther conquests, and has been employed in strengthening, with all the force of argument, the theory of a sentiment, which, perhaps, might have been more prudently left to its own operations.

According to its doctrines, the Colonies, those possessions for which humanity has been wounded and justice set aside, have not that value which cupidity has affixed to them, but are ruinous to the deluded mother-country. The possibility of replacing them by settlements more contiguous, and under a climate more similar to our own; (that of Africa or the Mediterranean Islands for instance;) the necessity there must one day arise of resigning possessions so distant, inhabited by men whose ingratitude and treachery there is reason to foresee, &c. &c. all these motives united lead us to regard a voluntary abandonment as no more than an anticipation of events inevitable, with the advantage of a previous preparation and a provision of more durable resources. Our wiser neighbours have made similar calculations respecting *their* North-American colonies, proving, by the sums expended in their defence, how burthensome they have been.

Although such calculations (natural enough by way of consolation for having lost them) related only to the *continental* colonies, resembling *but in name* the colonies of the *American Archipelago*, yet this difference did not strike every mind. Commercial policy appeared to second the dictates of humanity, and the number of the

* These accusations have been omitted by the translator, as being now generally discredited. See Mr. Bertrand's own opinion of them in the subsequent part of his speech.

Philanthropists was swelled by all those, whose sensibility, in order to be excited, needed other stimulatives than those of philanthropy itself.

“ This is the system, (say the planters,) which has erroneously and cruelly occasioned those bloody scenes of which we are the victims. Follow, step by step, the proceedings and effects of this proselyte-making zeal, which began by preaching an abolition of slavery and unqualified liberty to our negroes; which then moderating its pretensions, the better to graduate its progress, asked only a suppression of the trade; and which at last, with a more plausible and secure aim, has seemed to confine its attention to the elevation of the people of colour, the more effectually to work our destruction. *Will it not be deemed impossible, that a system, assuming humanity as its basis, should be capable of producing effects so cruel?* Has not the history of those very climates furnished us with a fact, a reference to which cannot but do honour to the most scrupulous philanthropist? It is to the humane and pious Las Cazas that America owes her negroes; touched with the evils which his fellow-citizens inflicted upon the native Caribbs, he sought in Africa for men already doomed to slavery, who, without aggravation of misery and by a simple exchange of fetters, under a climate similar to their own, might supply the place of the Americans, alike unfit for labour and for chains. If this pious missionary was deceived by his humanity; if, to save from labour and slavery a remnant of the Caribbs, he has been the means of dooming to that lot millions of Africans, let the modern philosophers, who cannot pretend purer motives, see that *they also* fail not of their object. In their attempt, to put an end to the slavery of the negroes, they may reduce to misery five or six millions of their white fellow-citizens, friends and brethren, and may overturn the strongest pillars of the national prosperity; nor will they do effectual good to those whom they wish to serve. Without a concurrence of all the interested powers, the Colonies have only to choose their protector, the slaves their master. These last may, indeed, as they have lately too dreadfully proved, attempt to cut the throats of ourselves, our wives, and children, and of all who are set over them; but it will be only that they may exchange one servitude for another.” —

Such, Sirs, are the arguments advanced, in their turns, by the planters and their antagonists. In my administrative capacity, solely, have I endeavoured to discriminate the causes, whatever they may be, which have led the way to the troubles in St. Domingo, that I might the more effectually apply the means of prevention.

As to the accusations, against the Colonists, of designs to submit themselves to the English; to render themselves independent; to effect a counter-revolution: — I know nothing; I have found nothing, in evidence, of projects, so culpable, extravagant, or absurd!

As to the accusation brought against the partisans of the liberty of the blacks, — I cannot conceal that it appears much better founded. But,

whatever

whatever be the cause, where are we to look for the remedy of these disasters? How are we to prevent their repetition?

The first and most useful step is, doubtless, to become acquainted with our true interests, and real commercial relation with the colonies; *since an ignorance of these principles has been the primary source of our errors and of their calamities.*

We should consider our Colonies as so many manufactories, established at 1800 leagues distance from the mother-country, and the mother-country herself as the moneyed firm, which has furnished the expence of these establishments of agriculture and industry, whether for their first foundation, maintenance, or protection. Every member of the mother-country is a stock-holder in this important speculation; to share the benefits of which, it is enough to have been born in France; and all French citizens, I repeat it, *all*, are interested in its success, though in different degrees: some as farmers or proprietors of lands, which, in whole or in part, are cultivated to supply the wants of these distant consumers, and who would be ruined without so important a demand for their produce; some as embarked in various departments of industry, wholly or partially occupied in supplying the Colonies, and whose productions without them would remain on hand; some, again, as commercial people, navigators, coasting traders, &c. forming a third class, busied in carrying on with the Colonies the connection of the other two. Whatever be our rank in this firm, whatever be the sum and nature of our shares, from the laborious husbandman to the lazy money-lender, from the industrious manufacturer to the useless stock-jobber, from the adventurous speculator to the cautious annuitant, — *all*, yes, *all*, are interested in the fate of these valuable establishments, by whose aid even Calumny herself tells her poison to a profit.

Regulated and governed in whatever manner, these establishments still keep their primitive character of an enterprise, in which the mother-country has embarked, and of which she alone ought to reap the profit or the loss.

As to calculations of the sums these establishments have cost, supposing them not exaggerated, *how are we to appreciate, in gold or in figures, the advantages which result to Europe from her Colonies?* Is it possible we should be blind to the obvious increase of our population? the only true criterion of national prosperity, an infallible sign at once of the plenty of food and of the need of hands; for, men multiply where subsistence abounds and where labour invites. Can we fail to see, that an obligation to sell their produce only to the members of the mother-country, and to buy of them alone every article they want, forms a double source of riches, of which the measure is immense? In short, the Colonies take from us all they want at such prices as we please to impose; they return us a sufficiency of their valuable produce, not only to serve the consumption of twenty-five millions of inhabitants, but to form a very great surplus, which we sell with profit to the nations who have no Colonies of their own. And shall all these advantages be estimated by a series of figures, which, expressing only the relations of quantity, are applicable to none but to material and inanimate objects?

Observe,

Observe, Sirs, that the effect of such erroneous calculations, respecting our Colonies, must necessarily impose a retrograde course upon the public fortune. It is not to moderate the speed, but to stop at once the motion, of this powerful wheel, that we are invited. In an instant, we are to condemn to inactivity those millions of arms, which are now employed to move it: in an instant, we are to cut all the threads, which conduct us to such an immensity of wealth! Estimate, I beseech you, Sirs, the dreadful effects of such a sudden separation!

(G.)

With the following Postscript to Mr. de Blanchelande's Letter, of the 30th of November, to the Minister of Marine, (which is among the latest authentic advices from St. Domingo,) the Translator closes this imperfect sketch of the miseries of the richest and most important Colony in the world.

"THIS instant I have received a Letter from the Municipality of Port au Prince, of which I subjoin a copy.* The truth of its contents has been confirmed to me by Mr. Saule de Saulnoir. Some curse from above has, I fear, been pronounced against this wretched Colony dooming it to entire destruction! Calamities of every description are surely to fall to its lot! A ray of hope, on the arrival of the Commissioners sent by the National Assembly, seemed destined to soften my anxieties and my pain: that momentary satisfaction is now cruelly disturbed; and the more so as our situation in the northern province and the exhausted state of our resources form obstacles to my wishes of flying to the succour of the ravaged departments. But that would require superior forces, and scarcely have we sufficient to maintain a humiliating defence. If our brethren in Europe come not speedily to our succour, what will become of us!"

* This letter gives an account of the burning of that rich and flourishing town on the 22d of November. The most moderate estimation makes the loss, sustained on that occasion, 150,000,000 of livres.

Postscript by the Translator.

SINCE the above papers were published in their present form I have seen a printed letter, addressed to a member of parliament, and signed T. Clarkson, the object of which is to remove, from the Amis des Noirs in France, and, consequently, from their English predecessors in the same career, (among whom Mr. Clarkson so conspicuously figures,) all imputation of having, in the most distant manner, occasioned the insurrection in St. Domingo, which he either lays at the door of the nature of slavery and the slave-trade, or attributes to circumstances attendant upon the revolution in France.

This

This letter appeared, without signature, some time ago, in the Morning-Chronicle, where it has been ably replied to by a writer who signs *Detector*, and another under the name of *Philo-Detector*. Indeed Mr. C. in a great measure refutes himself; for, while he seeks to draw a parallel between the St. Domingo insurrection and former ones, whether in the ancient world or in the West-India islands, he expressly tells us, from Mr. Long, that "all the insurrections, which can be traced in the history of those islands, were begun by the *imported Africans* and *never by the creole, or island-born, slaves.*"

Now this single fact, well considered, will lead us to a very different conclusion from that which Mr. Clarkson draws from it. Whoever has attentively perused the preceding accounts will be convinced, that the insurrection in St. Domingo, manifesting itself in a different form and among a totally different description of persons, cannot reasonably be imputed to the same cause which produced those former insurrections of which Mr. C. speaks. An event so extraordinary must be traced to some origin equally extraordinary with itself. Upon *Africans, newly imported*, the inflammatory writings and speeches of English or French fanatics could have no influence; the ferocity they brought with them from their own uncivilized country, and their own barbarous wars, must have habitually disposed *them* to spurn at labour, and to resist an authority, the nature and effects of which they could not possibly know. On the contrary, the creole, or island-born, slaves, particularly those among them who were domesticated, and "*most kindly treated by their masters,*" were exactly capable of receiving, though not of properly digesting, the poison conveyed in our late doctrines. Many of them can read, and some few can write. It is notorious that they do read our journals and our pamphlets, and make them the subject of their nightly lectures to such of their brethren as assemble for the purpose of being instructed.

Persons of this description, as we have seen, though at no former time given to sedition, and certainly not incited by any recent grievances, were "the soul of the insurrection in St. Domingo." "*It was they (and not the lately-imported Africans) who delivered their humane masters to the assassin's sword! It was they who seduced, and stirred up to revolt, the gangs disposed to fidelity! It was they who massacred all that refused to become their accomplices!*" And hence arises strong *presumptive evidence* that the *new effects* sprang from the *new cause*; that an insurrection, more deep and deliberate in its plan, more extensive and atrocious in its execution, than any which preceded it, unlike them in its origin and all its circumstances, must stand connected with those *novel proceedings* respecting our islands; the influence of which had been but too surely predicted by persons best acquainted with the character of the negroes.

And do not the abolitionists themselves confirm this presumption? Are they not *now* anxious to disclaim their having aimed at the emancipation of the negroes? Witness the late advertisements from the Old Jewry; Mr. Wilberforce's declaration, on the 9th of March last, in the House of Commons; the bold assertions of Mr. Clarkson's defender, Scrutator, in the Morning Chronicle; who tells us "the society for abolition have repeatedly denied that emancipation is their object;" witness, too, in France, Mr. Brissot's declaration to Mr. Du Morier which, the latter reports, p. 37 of his printed speech, *Sur les Troubles des Colonies*; "*that he had never thought of liberating the slaves: that, during his residence in Virginia, he was convinced that the negroes were as unfit for liberty as infants at two years of age; that he was persuaded the abolition of slavery would be a great evil to them; and that, in opposition to it, he would lose his life if necessary.*"

Whence this sudden retraction of sentiments and opinions, which I shall prove to have been avowed, if not by these very persons, yet by others with whom

whom the
dissemina
gentleme
have occ
I must re
written
certain b
murder
ing bene
ected th
liberty!
minds b
lay befo
" W
great ca
of the h
by the

" In
being
" I
the neg
being c
moved
" F
is not
" T
answer
" m
mission
" p
would
slave-
" f
shall d

"
and in
them
Pr
mend

† I
duced
pampl
second
" f
seeing
adopte
so be
imme
what
all th
A
have
for fi

whom they have associated, and whose writings they have been industrious to disseminate? Does it not proceed from a heartfelt conviction among these gentlemen, that the doctrines, which they are now so anxious to disclaim, have occasioned the subsequent calamities? Yet, though every word which I must recal to their recollection should seem to them, as it does to me, to be written in characters of blood; though I should conjure up to them "*at a certain hour*"* the wretched colonists of St. Domingo, men, women, infants, murdered, violated, impaled; and those, the wretched objects of their erring benevolence, in prey to every evil from which their late servitude protected them, with tyranny intolerable superadded, under the name, alas, of liberty! Though these be the sad impressions that must be produced in their minds by every rude vibration of memory, yet mine is the task to select and lay before them, from volumes of a similar tendency, the following passages.

"We could not have imagined that the moment was so near, in which the great cause of the *liberty of the negroes*, involved in that of the general liberty of the human species, should be solemnly *established, avowed, and sanctioned*, by the National Assembly."

Mirabeau's Comment on the Declaration of Rights, No. 30,
Courier de Province.

"In the colonies, the negroes have a *right to resist* their masters without being considered as rebellious." Clarkson's Essay, p. 241.

"I confess I think a different decision" (from that respecting the liberty of the negro Somerset) "could hardly have been given, if a similar cause, *after being carried through the inferior courts in the plantations*, were regularly removed for a final decision to this country." Cooper's Letters, p. 7.

"How little do we value the cause of freedom where our own emancipation is not concerned!" Ibid. p. 24.

"The experiment of *manumission, extensively tried*, has even lucratively answered." Ibid. p. 27.

"The objections stated would not lie to the gradual or even sudden *manumission* of the numerous negroes now holden in slavery." Ibid. p. 32.

"I argue upon the improbable supposition, that our West-Indian colonies would be materially injured by the *manumission of slaves and the abolition of the slave-trade*." Ibid. p. 33.

"*Soon shall the sun shine on none but freemen. The beams of the morning shall cease to illumine the fetters of slavery.*"

Abbé Grégoire's circular Letters dispersed in the colonies.

"Let us look with an eye of pity on those who are fast bound in misery and iron; let us consider those, who are thus bound, as being bound with them; let us break their bonds asunder, &c. &c." Peckard's Sermon, p. 39.

Priestley, Dickson, Dean Nicholls, &c. also, in direct terms, recommend emancipation, though in somewhat a more qualified manner.†

What

* Dean of Middleham's letter.

† In evidence of the spirit of some writers on the same side, though too recent to have produced, as yet, any effect in the West-India islands, I will add the following quotations from pamphlets disseminated with no small industry and expence.—The first seems to predict, the second exults over, the atrocities committed at St. Domingo.

"Surely we shall not limit our views merely to the *abolition of the African slave-trade*, seeing the colonial slavery, formed upon it, is in its principle *equally unjust*. The plan to be adopted, for putting the slaves in our islands in possession of their legal and natural right, *ought to be certain and speedy in its operation*.—Our exertions are not to be judged of merely by their immediate effects; for, they may produce remote ones of which we can form no estimate: but, whatever they may be, after having done our duty, we may leave them with Him who governs all things after the counsels of his own will."—*Address to the People of Great Britain*. Gurney.

A part of the immediate effects, for which this pious writer leaves the Almighty answerable, have now taken place in St. Domingo. The certain and speedy plan he recommends is a plan for filling our islands with rapine, pillage, conflagration, and blood! such, and such only, being

This letter appeared, without signature, some time ago, in the Morning-Chronicle, where it has been ably replied to by a writer who signs *Detector*, and another under the name of *Philo-Detector*. Indeed Mr. C. in a great measure refutes himself; for, while he seeks to draw a parallel between the St. Domingo insurrection and former ones, whether in the ancient world or in the West-India islands, he expressly tells us, from Mr. Long, that "all the insurrections, which can be traced in the history of those islands, were begun by the *imported Africans* and never by the *creole, or island-born, slaves*."

Now this single fact, well considered, will lead us to a very different conclusion from that which Mr. Clarkson draws from it. Whoever has attentively perused the preceding accounts will be convinced, that the insurrection in St. Domingo, manifesting itself in a different form and among a totally different description of persons, cannot reasonably be imputed to the same cause which produced those former insurrections of which Mr. C. speaks. An event so extraordinary must be traced to some origin equally extraordinary with itself. Upon *Africans, newly imported*, the inflammatory writings and speeches of English or French fanatics could have no influence; the ferocity they brought with them from their own uncivilized country, and their own barbarous wars, must have habitually disposed them to spurn at labour, and to resist an authority, the nature and effects of which they could not possibly know. On the contrary, the creole, or island-born, slaves, particularly those among them who were domesticated, and "*most kindly treated by their masters*," were exactly capable of receiving, though not of properly digesting, the poison conveyed in our late doctrines. Many of them can read, and some few can write. It is notorious that they do read our journals and our pamphlets; and make them the subject of their nightly lectures to such of their brethren as assemble for the purpose of being instructed.

Persons of this description, as we have seen, though at no former time given to sedition, and certainly not incited by any recent grievances, were "the soul of the insurrection in St. Domingo." "*It was they (and not the lately-imported Africans) who delivered their humane masters to the assassin's sword! It was they who seduced, and stirred up to revolt, the gangs disposed to fidelity! It was they who massacred all that refused to become their accomplices!*" And hence arises strong *presumptive evidence* that the *new effects* sprang from the *new cause*; that an insurrection, more deep and deliberate in its plan, more extensive and atrocious in its execution, than any which preceded it, unlike them in its origin and all its circumstances, must stand connected with those *novel* proceedings respecting our islands; the influence of which had been but too surely predicted by persons best acquainted with the character of the negroes.

And do not the abolitionists themselves confirm this presumption? Are they not *now* anxious to disclaim their having aimed at the emancipation of the negroes? Witness the late advertisements from the Old Jewry; Mr. Wilberforce's declaration, on the 9th of March last, in the House of Commons; the bold assertions of Mr. Clarkson's defender, Scrutator, in the Morning Chronicle; who tells us "the society for abolition have repeatedly denied that emancipation is their object:" witness, too, in France, Mr. Brissot's declaration to Mr. Du Morier which, the latter reports, p. 37 of his printed speech, *Sur les Troubles des Colonies*; "*that he had never thought of liberating the slaves: that, during his residence in Virginia, he was convinced that the negroes were as unfit for liberty as infants at two years of age; that he was persuaded the abolition of slavery would be a great evil to them; and that, in opposition to it, he would lose his life if necessary.*"

Whence this sudden retraction of sentiments and opinions, which I shall prove to have been avowed, if not by these very persons, yet by others with whom

whom the
disseminat
gentlemen
have occ
I must re
written i
certain bo
murdered
ing bene
tected th
liberty!
minds by
lay before
" W
great ca
of the h
by the M

" In
being c
" I c
the neg
being ca
moved
" H
is not c
" T
answer
" T
mission
" I
would
slave-t
" S
shall c

" I
and in
them
Pri
mend

† In
duced,
pamph
second
" S
seeing
adopted
to be c
immedi
what
all thi
A p
have n
for all

whom they have associated, and whose writings they have been industrious to disseminate? Does it not proceed from a heartfelt conviction among these gentlemen, that the doctrines, which they are now so anxious to disclaim, have occasioned the subsequent calamities? Yet, though every word which I must recal to their recollection should seem to them, as it does to me, to be written in characters of blood; though I should conjure up to them "at a certain hour" the wretched colonists of St. Domingo, men, women, infants, murdered, violated, impaled; and those, the wretched objects of their erring benevolence, in prey to every evil from which their late servitude protected them, with tyranny intolerable superadded, under the name, alas, of liberty! Though these be the sad impressions that must be produced in their minds by every rude vibration of memory, yet mine is the task to select and lay before them, from volumes of a similar tendency, the following passages.

"We could not have imagined that the moment was so near, in which the great cause of the *liberty of the negroes*, involved in that of the general liberty of the human species, should be solemnly *established, avowed, and sanctioned*, by the National Assembly."

Mirabeau's Comment on the Declaration of Rights, No. 30,
Courier de Province.

"In the colonies, the negroes have a *right to resist* their masters without being considered as rebellious."

Clarkson's Essay, p. 241.

"I confess I think a different decision" (from that respecting the liberty of the negro Somerset) "could hardly have been given, if a similar cause, *after being carried through the inferior courts in the plantations*, were regularly removed for a final decision to this country."

Cooper's Letters, p. 7.

"How little do we value the cause of freedom where our own emancipation is not concerned!"

Ibid. p. 24.

"The experiment of *manumission, extensively tried*, has even lucratively answered."

Ibid. p. 27.

"The objections stated would not lie to the gradual or even sudden *manumission* of the numerous negroes now holden in slavery."

Ibid. p. 32.

"I argue upon the improbable supposition, that our West-Indian colonies would be materially injured by the *manumission of slaves and the abolition of the slave-trade*."

Ibid. p. 33.

"*Soon shall the sun shine on none but freemen. The beams of the morning shall cease to illumine the fetters of slavery.*"

Abbé Grégoire's circular Letters dispersed in the colonies.

"Let us look with an eye of pity on those who are fast bound in misery and iron; let us consider those, who are thus bound, as being bound with them; let us break their bonds asunder, &c. &c." Peckard's Sermon, p. 39.

Priestley, Dickson, Dean Nicholls, &c. also, in direct terms, recommend emancipation, though in somewhat a more qualified manner.†

What

* Dean of Middleham's letter.

† In evidence of the spirit of some writers on the same side, though too recent to have produced, as yet, any effect in the West-India islands, I will add the following quotations from pamphlets disseminated with no small industry and expence.—The first seems to predict, the second exults over, the atrocities committed at St. Domingo.

"Surely we shall not limit our views merely to the abolition of the African slave-trade, seeing the colonial slavery, formed upon it, is in its principle equally unjust. The plan to be adopted, for putting the slaves in our islands in possession of their legal and natural right, ought to be certain and speedy in its operation.—Our exertions are not to be judged of merely by their immediate effects; for, they may produce remote ones of which we can form no estimate: but, whatever they may be, after having done our duty, we may leave them with Him who governs all things after the counsels of his own will."—Address to the People of Great Britain. Gurney.

A part of the immediate effects, for which this pious writer leaves the Almighty answerable, have now taken place in St. Domingo. The certain and speedy plan he recommends is a plan for filling our islands with rapine, pillage, conflagration, and blood! such, and such only, being

What effect these and many other similar writings produced we gather from the following facts.

An insurrection of the slaves happened in July, 1789, at Martinique; during which the negro prisoners declared they had understood "*there was to be no more slavery; for, that it had been so ordered in France.*"

Another insurrection followed in the same island two months after the former, in which also it was publicly declared "*that the king had abolished slavery.*"

In 1790, the slaves rose at Guadeloupe in the same persuasion; "*that their liberty had been obtained in France.*"

In that year and the beginning of 1791 there was an insurrection of the slaves at Dominica, who claimed *their rights* but *pretended no grievances*.

What affinity do these insurrections bear to those preceding ones; which Mr. Clarkson allows with Mr. Long to have been *all begun by the imported Africans and never by the creole, or island-born, slaves?* Can we be so blind to the obvious relation between cause and effect as not to see, in these calamities, harbingers of that more dreadful one which soon followed in St. Domingo; the direct and legitimate offspring of our late discussions concerning the slave-trade?

But, to the revolution in France; and to circumstances attending it, must, according to Mr. Clarkson, be imputed whatever of novelty there be in these terrible events. What he would make a *primary*, I will allow only to have been a *secondary, cause*. To a Mirabeau; a Robertspierre, a Grégoire, a Pétion de Villeneuve, (all eminent among the *Amis des Noirs*,) who, by a dexterous manœuvre, obtained the decree of the 15th of May, contradicting the wise preceding decree of the 8th of March; we owe those measures which set the colonies in a flame. Suddenly to exalt the people of colour, without attention to local prejudices and long-established subordination, was a measure resulting from *their* principles and preparatory to an emancipation of the blacks. Mr. Clarkson has found himself under a necessity glaringly to misrepresent the proceedings in respect to Ogé and to the people of colour: His Opponents, Detector and Philo-Detector, have in some respects exposed his fallacious statement; but, for a fuller account of the sickle and capricious proceedings of the National Assembly, respecting the colonies and of the part which the *Amis des Noirs* have had in promoting them, I refer my reader to a pamphlet, before-quoted, written by Mr. Du Morier, a member of the National Assembly, who is candid enough to acquit the *Amis des Noirs* of any *ill intention*, and professes himself a democrat and philanthropist, yet undertakes to establish, "upon incontestible evidence, that, intention out of the question, the troubles of the colonies, and of St. Domingo particularly, are the immediate or remote result of the discussions concerning negro-slavery and the questions connected with it."

We owe, perhaps, to the wavering counsels and unsettled government of France, that, *with them*, the flame has first burst out: hence we have obtained a solemn warning. May we be wise enough to turn it to advantage!

being the signals of negro-emancipation! And, doubtless, he hopes soon to occasion *farther matter of exultation* to Mr. Percival Stockdale, who thus applauds the cruelties, committed by the negroes in St. Domingo, in a letter addressed to his friend, Mr. Granville Sharp.

"Should we not *approve* their conduct in this violence? Should we not crown it with eulogium if they exterminate their tyrants with fire and sword? Should they *deliberately* inflict the most exquisite tortures on those tyrants; would they not be *excusable* in the moral judgements of those who properly value those inestimable blessings, personal, rational, and religious, liberty?"

Are these the advocates for abolition who confess their views to a cessation of the trade, and whose writings could, at no time, tend to excite insurrections in the colonies?

T H E E N D .

ERRATUM.—P. 13. l. 23. for *those* ~~two~~, read *those two* classes of men.

gather from

inique; da-
there was to

fter the for-
abolished fla-

that their

tion of the
ances.

ones; which
be imported
so blind to
calamities,
Domingo;
g the slave-

g it, must,
be in these
nly to have
oire, a Pé-
who, by a
ntradicting
e measures
of colour;
ation, was
nancipation
y glaringly
e of colour:
ets exposed
capricious
of the part
y reader to
ber of the
loirs of any
yet under-
out of the
ularly, are
lavery and

ernment of
e have ob-
dvantage!

farther mat-
mitted by the

it with eu-
erately inflict
l judgements
religious, li-

the trade, and